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Frank Baker

Steven Lay, reporter

Series: University focus

University of Alaska campus in Fairbanks, Alaska

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Steven Lay said students from rural Alaska have one of the highest attrition rates of any of the student groups at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. There are many factors for this. Frank Baker, director of the Rural Student Services Program said changing lifestyle is one of the biggest. Freedom is another change the students face. They try to help them develop skills. The challenge of the classes is more than what many of the students are prepared for. Lay said the Rural Student Services (RSS) helps the student with the transition the students face when they come to UAF from nonurban areas. The service starts before the students arrive on campus. RSS staff members assist students with housing, financial aid and other matters. Baker said they help the students with their classes and pitfalls that they might avoid. The program also reaches out to the high schools with the Upward Bound program. RSS is an outgrowth of the old student orientation services. Baker said they want to work with the rural high schools to help them to prepare students for college.

Karen Cedzo reported on activities on campus and in Fairbanks.